

Message Text

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ACTION NASA-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 DOE-15 ACDA-12 CIAE-00
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NASA FOR TERRELL

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: TSPA, TGEN, UR, US
SUBJECT: US-USSR SPACE COOPERATION (04.00)

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1. SUMMARY: DURING DISCUSSION WITH SCICOUNS, INTERKOSMO VICE CHAIRMAN VERESHCHETIN FIRED A BROADSIDE AT ALLEGED US FOOT-DRAGGING ON SHUTTLE-SALYUT AND UNRESPONSIVENESS IN OTHER ACTIVITIES WITHIN SPACE AGREEMENT. HE NOTED THE INTERNATIONAL SPACE PROGRAMS OF BOTH COUNTRIES ARE GRADUALLY DRIFTING APART, BLAMING US FOR GENERAL DETERIORATION OF SPACE COOPERATION AND COMMENTING ACIDLY ON DR. PRESS' CHINA VISIT AND HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES. HOWEVER, HE DID NOT CLAIM ANY SPECIFIC LINKAGE BETWEEN PROGRESS ON SHUTTLE-SALYUT AND SOVIET WILLINGNESS TO PROCEED WITH OTHER ACTIVITIES UNDER THE SPACE AGREEMENT. END SUMMARY.

2. SCICOUNS CALLED ON INTERKOSMOS JULY 12 TO DELIVER WINTER/GUROVSKY LETTER (REFTEL) ON SPACE BIOLOGY AND
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MEDICINE. VERESHCHETIN USED OCCASION TO ENTER INTO WIDE RANGING DISCUSSION IN WHICH FOLLOWING POINTS WERE NOTED:

A. SHUTTLE/SALYUT - VERESHCHETIN STATED THE SOVIETS ARE STILL AWAITING A US RESPONSE AT THE NEXT MEETING OF THE SHUTTLE-SALYUT WORKING GROUPS, NOTING THAT BOTH

SIDES HAD AGREED TO RECONVENE IN MARCH OF THIS YEAR. THE SOVIETS PERCEIVE THIS DELAY AS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF US COOLNESS TO SHUTTLE/SALYUT, AN ATTITUDE THAT WAS EVIDENT AS EARLY AS TWO YEARS AGO, AND IN SHARP CONTRAST TO US EAGERNESS TO PROCEED ON APOLLO/SOYUZ - SHUTTLE-SALYUT, WHICH VERESHCHETIN TERMED THE KEYSTONE OF BILATERAL SPACE COOPERATION, REQUIRES LARGE ADVANCE COMMITMENT OF MANPOWER AND RESOURCES AND DELAYS CANNOT BE TOLERATED INDEFINITELY. IN THE ABSENCE OF A US RESPONSE, THE FOCUS OF SOVIET INTERNATIONAL SPACE COOPERATION IS SHIFTING TO OTHER PROJECTS. VERESHCHETIN NOTED POINTEDLY THAT HE WAS INVITED TO ATTEND SAME DAY A RECEPTION AT POLISH EMBASSY HERE TO CELEBRATE RECENT RETURN OF SOVIET/POLISH SPACE TEAM.

B. SPACE MEDICINE AND BIOLOGY (04.0502) - SCICOUNS TRANSMITTED WINTER/GUROVSKY LETTER (REFTEL) UNDERLINING THAT US CONSIDERS ACTIVITIES OF WG SEPARATE AND DISTINCT FROM SHUTTLE/SALYUT. VERESHCHETIN RESPONDED THAT GUROVSKY MAY 29 LETTER AND SOVIET DECISION TO DISCUSS THE SPACE MEDICINE AND BIOLOGY QUESTION WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF SHUTTLE-SALYUT PROGRAM GREW OUT OF WG DISCUSSIONS AT THE LAST WG MEETING. HE STATED IT SEEME "NATURAL" TO CONSIDER THE TWO PROJECTS TOGETHER, BUT SOVIETS WERE NOT NECESSARILY LINKING THEM. THIS ISSUE COULD BE WORKED OUT AT THE WG MEETING SCHEDULED FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LENINGRAD IN OCTOBER. HE EXPRESSED SOME CONCERN ABOUT US SIDE'S ATTENDANCE AT OCTOBER MEETING, GIVEN PRESENT POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE, HE SAID THAT IF US SIDE WERE NOT GOING TO SHOW UP OR CANCEL AT THE LAST MOMENT, IT WOULD BE BETTER TO LET SOVIETS KNOW AT ONCE, NOT AFTER THEY HAD GONE TO THE TROUBLE OF MAKING RESERVATIONS, ETC.

C. INTERPLANETARY COOPERATION - SCICOUNS REMARKED THAT INTERKOSMOS CHAIRMAN PETROV HAD TOLD HIM AT AMBASSADOR'S JULY 4 RECEPTION THAT HE HAD A "GOOD" DISCUSSION WITH NASA OFFICIALS ON INTERPLANETARY COOPERATION DURING THE JUNE COSPAR MEETING AT INNSBRUCK. VERESHCHETIN NOTED HE PARTICIPATED IN THESE DISCUSSIONS AND AGREES WITH PETROV'S CHARACTERIZATION, HOWEVER, MOST OF THE INFORMATION CONVEYED WAS FROM THE SOVIETS TO THE US -- SUCH AS THE DETAILS OF THE SOVIET 1978 VENUS SHOT. IN RESPONSE TO SCICOUNS QUERY, VERESHCHETIN SAID THE SOVIETS WERE SATISFIED WITH US PERFORMANCE AT THE INNSBRUCK MEETING AND DID NOT REQUIRE AT THIS POINT FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT US INTERPLANETARY PLANS. VERESHCHETIN NOTED THAT BOTH SIDES HAD INITIALLED A PROTOCOL OF RESULTS OF THE INNSBRUCK MEETING AND THAT

THE PROTOCOL WAS BEFORE THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES FOR RATIFICATION (VERESHCHETIN IMPLIED THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD RATIFY THE PROTOCOL, BUT ONLY AFTER RATIFICATION BY NASA. EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE RUN-DOWN OF INNSBRUCK MEETING AND STATUS OF NASA RATIFICATION).

D. OTHER WG ACTIVITIES - VERESHCHETIN NOTED, IN THE CONTEXT OF GENERAL DETERIORATION OF SPACE COOPERATION, THAT TWO WG ACTIVITIES WERE APPARENTLY DRYING UP BECAUSE OF LACK OF US RESPONSE: SPACE METEOROLOGY (04.02) WHERE US HAD DELAYED HOLDING JOINT MEETING FOR OVER ONE YEAR, AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT (04.04) WHERE

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US HAD NOT YET PROVIDED PROJECT PROPOSALS
(EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE STATUS FROM NASA ON THESE
WGS)

E. DR. PRESS' CHINA VISIT AND HUMAN RIGHTS -
VERESHCHETIN COMMENTED SARDONICALLY THAT THERE
APPEARED TO BE SOME CONTRADICTION BETWEEN DR. PRESS'
VISIT TO CHINA AND US HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS. HE SAID
DURING HIS EARLIER DAYS AT INTERKOSMOS HE KNEW MANY
CHINESE SCIENTISTS, INCLUDING THE PRESIDENT OF THE
CHINESE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, WHO HAD "PERISHED". - WERE
THE CHINESE NOT SUBJECT TO THE SAME CRITERIA AS
OTHERS? FURTHERMORE, THE SOVIETS DID NOT SEE THE
CONNECTION BETWEEN POLITICAL BEHAVIOR AND SCIENCE
COOPERATION, THE SOVIETS WILLINGLY PURSUED SPACE
COOPERATION WITH THE US EVEN AT TIME OF ACTIVE AMERICAN
AGGRESSION AGAINST VIET NAM, A CLOSE SOVIET ALLY.

SCICOUNS REBUTTED THESE CHARGES, NOTING THAT NASA MUST DEFENT BEFORE CONGRESS ANY BUDGET REQUESTS FOR SHUTTLE/SALYUT. EVENTS SUCH AS THE GINZBURG AND SHCHARANSKIY TRIALS CANNOT HELP BUT WEAKEN THE SUPPORT OF THOSE IN THE US WHO ARE TRYING TO FURTHER US/SOVIET COOPERATION IN SPACE AND OTHER AREAS.
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3. IN CONCLUDING, VERESHCHETIN NOTED THAT SOVIETS STILL WANT COOPERATION IN SPACE WITH THE US, BUT FEEL IT IS UP TO THE US TO MAKE THE NEXT MOVES. HE SAID THE SOVIETS HAD ACTIVE JOINT PROGRAMS WITH OTHER SOCIALIST CDUNTRIES, AND IF US WAS NOT WILLING TO CONTINUE COOPERATION IN SPACE, THEY WOULD CONTINUE THEIR PROGRAMS SEPARATELY. VERESHCHETIN COMMENTS ON UN OUTER SPACE COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES REPORTED SEPTEL.

4. COMMENT: WE HAVE HEARD INTERKOSMOS COMPLAINTS ABOUT US FOOT DRAGGING ON SHUTTLE/SALYUT BEFORE; HOWEVER, THE ASCERBIC NATURE OF VERESHCHETIN'S REMARKS SET A NEW MARK, EVEN BY HIS ACCOMPLISHED STANDARDS. SOVIETS ARE EVIDENTLY STILL HOPEFUL ABOUT SHUTTLE/SALYUT, AND WE READ VERESHCHETIN'S REMARKS ON THE SHIFT OF SOVIET COOPERATIVE EMPHASIS TO SOCIALIST ALLIES AS AN EFFORT TO MASK THEIR "DEMANDEUR" POSITION. DESPITE VERESHCHETIN'S DENIALS, IT SEEMS CLEAR THE SOVIETS WILL TRY TO OBTAIN LEVERAGE ON SHUTTLE/SALYUT BY CREATING DE FACTO LINKAGES WITH WG ACTIVITIES OF POSSIBLY GREATER INTEREST TO US, SUCH AS SPACE MEDICINE AND BIOLOGY. END COMMENT. MATLOCK

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